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## Glossary

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- Adaptation: Changes an organism makes to adjust to a different or changing environment.
- Aquifer: Underground porous rock that holds groundwater.
- Competition: The simultaneous demand by two or more organisms for limited environmental resources, such as nutrients, water, space, or light.
- Drainage area: An area from which direct surface runoff from precipitation normally drains to a specified point, catchment area, river, lake, reservoir, etc.
- Ecosystem: Community of organisms interacting with one another and with the chemical and physical factors making up their environment.
- Evaporation: A physical change where a liquid turns into a vapor or gas.
- Filter: A porous material through which a liquid is passed in order to separate the water from suspended particulate matter.
- Forbs: Herbaceous plants, excluding grasses and sedges; especially used to describe broad-leaved, flowering plants. An herb that is not a grass, sedge, or rush.
- Function: The purpose or benefit provided by a specific stage/aspect of a process.
- Groundwater: Water that infiltrates into the ground and renews/recharges underground aquifers.
- Headwaters: The source of a stream or river
- Herbaceous: Green and leaf-like in appearance or texture. A non-woody plant.
- Hydrologic cycle: A circulation of water from a water body to the atmosphere, to the land, back to open water either above or below ground, or directly back into the atmosphere.
- Impervious: Not capable of being penetrated.
- Infiltration: The movement of water through the soil.
- Native species: An indigenous species. A native plant historically occurs naturally somewhere within the boundaries of a given region.
- Niche: The function or position of an organism or population within an ecological community.
- Non-native species: A non-native species, or exotic, is a species introduced to a location outside its natural geographic range. Exotics enter an area as intentional horticulture, agriculture, or arrive accidentally.
- Non-point source pollution: This comes from diffuse, undefined sources; it is usually associated with land uses like urban development and agriculture. This kind of pollution and the stormwater runoff it occurs in is considered the most threatening to the nation's water quality.
- Order: A taxonomic category of organisms ranking above a family and below a class.
- Perennial: A plant that lives for more than two growing seasons. Perennial plants live for many years. Usually they flower every year. Herbaceous perennials die back each year.
- Pervious: Able to be penetrated or permeable. This is a surface that allows rainwater to be absorbed into the soil.
- Phenology: The study of seasonal change.
- Pollution: The destruction or contamination of a natural resource usually by harmful substances entering the environment.

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## Glossary (cont.)

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- Rain garden: A specialized garden made up of native plants that captures water and allows it to soak into the ground instead of running off into the storm sewers.
- Runoff: Rainwater that flows over the land because the ground and vegetation cannot absorb it.
- Slope: A stretch of ground forming a natural or artificial incline.
- Soil type: Usually refers to the different sizes of mineral particles in a sample of soil. Soil is made up of three soil particles, grouped according to size as sand, silt, and clay.
- Species: A group of populations reproductively isolated from other such groups.
- Storm water: The overflow of surface water due to a heavy rain or snowstorm.
- Taxonomy: The science of classification.
- Transpiration: A process where water moves up a plant and out of its leaves as water vapor, and into the atmosphere.
- Watershed: The entire land area draining into a specific body of water. These areas are divided by ridges of high land.